

# Member Alert

February 2020



## President's corner

Ben Romanowski, President, Bus SA

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President's corner

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### Happy new year to one and all

Of course, it hasn't been a particularly happy one for many South Australians with the awful early start to bushfire season, and the devastation on KI and in the Cudlee Creek area.

The Board has decided to donate \$500 to each of the two main government fundraising arms for the fires (one donation for KI, one for greater SA).

Government covers administration fees so we're confident of getting the most bang for our donated buck. Our thoughts go out to all of those impacted by the bushfires.

In my last message to you I mentioned a lack of bushfire policy and guidelines in our industry. The need for it came out of a discussion at the AGM, you may recall.

First draft bushfire Emergency Management Planning (EMP) guidelines are well and truly underway, and we should be able to get them to you for comment in the next Member Alert (along with some draft bushfire EMP templates).

### New – engagement dinners

I invite you to read Andrea's report on page 2 of this Alert, it talks about changes to our traditional conference model.

The Board has put a fair bit of thought into how we can build strong links with the politicians who need to make decisions around the challenge of mobility in their electorates, and help broaden the influence of Bus SA's body of policy.

We've decided to try a new tack this year - a dinner, networking and talk format that will give us the opportunity to really drive our messages home.

What you can deliver on behalf of our communities is a cornerstone of our industry capability - we will be encouraging you to attend. We will keep you informed as we develop this model.





## EO's report

Andrea Overall, Executive Officer

### Bus SA News

2020 will be an important year for Bus SA, with two main initiatives in the works:

#### Meaningful grassroots political engagement

This year we are making some changes to how we go about broadening the policy knowledge around our industry and how to keep people moving in South Australia - with a particular focus on peri-urban and regional mobility. The Board is keen to build strong links with political parties, with a view to getting genuine support and traction for our policies.

As you know, driving change through government requires a patient game. We're building support and understanding of the Bus SA agenda (regional and metropolitan mobility, safety, and policy) at the foundational levels of government.

The Board believes it is time to move away from an annual conference, and towards policy and information focused dinners.

We want to work with politicians who will understand and promote our platform, and believe that gathering us all together – members, partners and politicians – will lead to constructive and productive discussion.

At this time Luran is working with Members of Parliament to investigate a way in which we can build this closer engagement model. We hope to be announcing details of our 2020 engagement dinners soon.

#### Improved Bus SA profile

Via a structured communications strategy we will be upping engagement with members, our partners, and the world at large. We're looking to cement Bus SA's position as the 'go to' experts within our industry.

Using a range of communications tools and methods – articles and thought pieces, traditional and social media, relationship building and commentary – we'll push out material that promotes our platform and positions Bus SA as the leading industry authority.

Please feel free to contact me via phone or email if you have any suggestions, or if I can help you with anything.

Regards, Andrea

Phone: (08) 8269 1077

Email: [admin@bussa.asn.au](mailto:admin@bussa.asn.au)

### Other conferences coming up this year

- 18 April - QBIC's Annual Conference on the Gold Coast
- 23 May - TasBus Annual Conference in Hobart
- 9 & 10 July - BAV Maintenance Conference in Melbourne
- 16 & 17 July - BusNSW Annual Conference in Sydney
- 28, 29 & 30 October - BIC National Conference in Rotorua NZ

### BIC Council meetings

- April 17 – QBIC Conference – Sea World
- August 12 – Canberra BIC offices
- October 27 – Rotorua – Venue TBA

## CORONAVIRUS

### MYTHS

### FACTS

Coronavirus is the most dangerous virus that exists.

The common flu kills 60 times more people annually than the coronavirus.

I will die if I am diagnosed with the coronavirus.

Only 2% of cases have reported deaths, and of these deaths most were associated with weaker immune systems (e.g. old age).

I need to buy a hazmat suit and a n95 mask to stay protected.

Washing hands and sneezing into elbows is the best practice.

Antibiotics are effective in treating coronavirus.

Antibiotics only work against bacteria, not viruses.

Coronavirus only affects older people.

People of all ages can be affected by the virus.

Pets can spread the coronavirus.

There is no evidence to suggest that pets can be infected with the virus.

Source: World Health Organisation



## Government Matters

Lauran Huefner, Director Bus SA

### Adelaide Metro

The next few weeks should see the announcement of the successful bidders for Adelaide Metro contracts. It remains my view that there will be at least one new operator introduced, as it seems unlikely that government will only want two operators. With new contracts commencing on 1 July, each day brings the reveal closer.

On other things Adelaide Metro, I am hearing that government is pleased with the early results of their on-demand trials. These trials are set to conclude on June 30, so I anticipate some announcements about how those services will continue in the context of potential service area changes. If the service areas remain as they are, I wouldn't be surprised if on-demand trials were to continue in their existing format.

The new contracts will roll over in the current format – but expect significant background and research work to be undertaken in the first year of operation, with an eye to network changes that might be the most substantive for some time. It may prove to be a very exciting time.

### Investigation into fuel pricing

The state government has commissioned an investigation into the transparency of fuel prices here in SA.

The report will look at potential models for increasing price transparency and explore ways in which we hapless fuel purchasers can make informed choices about what we're spending and where.

Existing pricing models in other jurisdictions will be looked at in the report, such as the realtime fuel pricing scheme in NSW and the 24-hour price locking mechanism in WA.

The report will also explore the most "cost-effective solution to increase transparency in fuel prices in South Australia" which, given this government's aversion to spending money, may well mean we end up with no change at all.

Much as this is focused at the general public consumer, there may be benefits for you as operators to receive further information in real time to keep an eye on how your existing arrangements are performing.

### The role of buses in mass public transport

The BIC is working with Roads Australia on a strategic initiative looking at the role of buses in future mass public transport systems. They will be holding meetings with government and industry over the course of this year, and will work on areas such as fleet and infrastructure innovation, service design and models, land use management, etc.

Their objective is to develop policy to pave the way for more investment – financial and tangible – in bus rapid transit systems. While this is much more applicable to our counterparts in urban and large regional centres interstate – and we already have one of the world's finest rapid PT systems with our O-Bahn here in Adelaide – it's still one to watch.

This is a long game being played, but changes on a large scale do eventually tend to filter down, paving the way for improvements at more micro, regional, levels.

Anyway, I will keep you posted on developments as I hear about them. In the meantime, check out the article on the efficiency of the O-Bahn in this Member Alert.

Please feel free to email me at [lhuefner@bussa.asn.au](mailto:lhuefner@bussa.asn.au) if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

### Meme of the month





**Michael Apps**  
BIC Executive Director

## National Heavy Vehicle Charging Pilot – large scale on-road trial

You might have heard that the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Cities is

running a National Heavy Vehicle Charging Pilot. It is a partnership between government and industry testing potential direct user charging options for heavy vehicles.

A small scale on-road trial of the national pilot has been running over the past 5 months with 11 participants (including 2 BIC members) and over 180 vehicles. Like the small scale trial, the large scale on-road trial will include both telematics and manual reporting options to collect data. It will start in 2020 with 100 businesses and over 1000 vehicles across the country.

The trial is a great way to have your say about potential alternative heavy vehicle charges, better understand your current charges, and talk directly to the department about the national pilot.

The department is currently looking for participants from the bus and coach industry across all states and territories, particularly those with a small or medium sized fleet. This does not exclude large fleets, we need them in the pilot as well.

### How the large scale on-road trial works

There is no cost to participating in the trial and the impost on your time is minimal. Each month during the trial participants' road use data will be collected using telematics or a manual reporting option\* and a mock invoice will be produced. (\*During the life of the trial, the department will pay for installation of telematics or hubodometers for eligible businesses.)

The mock invoice will compare what you currently pay, registration and fuel based charges, with a potential alternative charge based on mass, distance and location.

The mock invoice will also include: data analysis; insights on fuel consumption; operational costs, and broader industry trends. All data collected in the trials is protected under confidentiality agreements and cannot be shared outside of the project.

It's important for all sectors of industry to have a say in any future changes to heavy vehicle charging so I encourage BIC members to get involved! This is important and we need to make sure that bus is clearly differentiated from trucks and freight when it comes to road charges.

The sign-up process is simple and more information can be found at [www.infrastructure.gov.au/nationalpilot](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/nationalpilot) or call the National Pilot team during business hours on 1800 065 113.

Regards, Michael Apps



**Wayne Patch**  
APTIA Chairperson

## BIC Industrial Working Group

The BIC Industrial Working Group will hold its first meeting of the year on Wednesday, 25 March 2020, at BIC's offices in Canberra.

As referred to in this edition the Federal Government has released a number of discussion papers, some of which are relevant to the industry and which the IWG will have to consider an industry response, with special reference to casual employment and the future of enterprise bargaining

The main focus of the IWG meeting will be the development of a set of industry explanatory notes for the Passenger Vehicle Transportation Award 2020, necessitated by the finalisation of the four yearly review and the release of a new edition of the PVTA.

By the meeting the final exposure draft will have been released by the FWC along with its final determination and scheduled release for 13 April 2020.

The set of explanatory notes will be the 5th edition of the explanatory notes since the introduction of the PVTA in 2010 and has acted as an industry barometer for understanding the provisions in the Award.

Regards, Wayne Patch

## Bus fire evacuation protocol

In March 2019, the Bus Industry Confederation (BIC) published an Advisory on bus fire evacuation protocols. It provides training packages that can be used to train bus drivers on how to reduce risks associated with bus fires. There is a range of useful sample documents that can be tailored to your business, including:

- vehicle evacuation procedures, including for accessible passengers
- driver pre-departure and operational check sheet
- training needs analysis spreadsheet
- fire extinguisher standards and approved examples.

There are also videos showing emergency evacuation scenarios, such as breakdown, accident, passenger medical incident, passenger threat, fire emergency, and evacuation of a special needs school bus.

The Advisory was developed as part of a safety project funded by the federal government through the Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative Funding Agreement, administered by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR). Go to:

<https://ozebus.worldsecuringsystems.com/bus-fire-evac>



**Ian MacDonald**

National IR Manager, APTIA

## Everybody out

Late in 2019 I appeared in the FWC on your behalf to contribute to the finalisation of the 4 yearly review process and can confirm that the President, his Hon Justice Ross, has determined that the new Passenger Vehicle Transportation Award 2020 will commence from 13 April 2020.

A final exposure draft will be published on 14 February 2020 and following the publication a determination will be made commencing the new PVTA from 13 April 2020.

A copy of the most recent exposure draft (14 October 2019) can be located on our website [www.aptia.com.au](http://www.aptia.com.au) in the Industry News section.

## What to expect in industrial relations from the Government in 2020?

Although workplace relations was a central platform of the ALP campaign, in part reflecting the ACTU's "Change the Rules" campaign, the Coalition was largely silent on workplace relations during the 2019 Federal election, choosing instead to focus on related areas such as economic management, jobs, skills and training.

The Government's official workplace relations election policy, "Tackling Union Lawlessness" largely focused on maintaining various bodies (such as the ABCC and the ROC) and oppose the reintroduction of the RSRT.

The Government has made clear both publicly and privately that any workplace relations changes will need to be evidenced, and that case for any changes will need to be made out.

Comments from the Prime Minister on Workplace Relations since the federal election include:

*"Business must make the case for further reforms to industrial relations before the Coalition will ever again contemplate change."*

Comments from Minister Porter on Workplace Relations since the federal election:

*"In Industrial Relations, my initial focus will be on the law enforcement aspects of the portfolio, ensuring adherence with Australia's industrial relations laws, particularly on building sites across Australia."*

*"I think what we'll be looking for initially is ways inside the architecture to make the system more efficient. There's clearly, I think – particularly with enterprise agreements - complexities that are not always well understood. Sometimes the system is very difficult to navigate. So, we'll be looking at those types of ways to increase the efficiency of the system in the immediate term."*

## Cases causing concern

The Government has intervened in the Workpac V. Rosatto case which is seeking to overturn the impact of Skene's case in so far as it relates payment of NES entitlements to long term casual employees. The case will no doubt be heard, at first instance but not resolved, in 2020.

Similarly, the Government has intervened in the Mondelez Appeal case in which annual leave was payable based upon the hours otherwise worked but for the holiday. It is also highly unlikely that the Appeal will finalise the issues.

Consideration also needs to be given to the decision in OneKey Workforce Pty Ltd v. CFMMEU, in which an application for approval of an agreement was rejected by the FWC because the applicant could not satisfy the Commission that all of the employees had the agreement adequately explained to them.

## Religious freedom reforms

The Government is seeking to introduce Bills which will protect an individual against discrimination based on their religious belief in key areas of life which, of course, includes the workforce. There are three Bills proposed:

- Religious Discrimination Bill 2019
- Religious Discrimination (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2019
- Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Freedom of Religion) Bill 2019

These Bills have been widely criticised by all sides of the argument and forced the Government to redraft them. However, the Government is committed to introducing some form of religious discrimination legislation and employers with the public transport industry will need to closely follow the final drafts.

The draft Bills seem to make it discriminatory, for instance, for an employer to refuse to allow an employee certain religious standard of dress in keeping with a person's religious beliefs.

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## Wage rates – where are they heading?

Wages will always be in the news, either because they are too low, too high, not matching cost of living standards or are internationally low or the subject of gross under payment by television celebrities.

### The RBA's view on wages

Australian workers no longer expect to see anything more than small increases in their pay packets, the RBA has speculated, while warning that if current conditions persist any wage growth may slow even further.

In observations contained in the final quarterly statement of 2019 on monetary policy, the central bank says, "it is possible that wage expectations have become anchored at low levels, as a result of a prolonged period of low wage and inflation".

Released a day after RBA Governor Philip Lowe met with the ACTU executive behind closed doors (see Related Article), the statement goes on to note that "an extended period of low wages growth and inflation may move wage-setting norms even lower than they are currently".

The RBA's latest prognosis comes on the heels of its previous quarterly statement in which it abandoned suggestions that labour shortages in a resurgent economy would produce wage hikes in the near future, observing that companies preferred to hold and attract workers with enticements such as flexible work.

### Inquiry into underpayment of wages

The Senate has approved a wide-ranging inquiry into wage and superannuation "theft" by employers, despite the Morrison Government arguing it is not needed.

Four Labor senators, including former union leaders Don Farrell and Tony Sheldon, initiated the inquiry by the upper house economics references committee. The inquiry, sparked by the public backlash over the admission that Woolworths had underpaid store managers up to \$300 million, is due to report by the last sitting day in June next year.

It will also look into whether government procurement practices can be modified to ensure that public contracts are not awarded to businesses that have engaged in wage and superannuation theft. The terms of reference require the inquiry to:

- identify the best ways to uncover wage and super theft;
- determine how to protect those who expose underpayments;
- investigate the most effective ways to recover unpaid entitlements;
- consider the tax treatment of recovered entitlements; and
- weigh-up changes to the existing legal framework to assist with recovery and deterrence.

Regards, Ian MacDonald



## O-Bahn "more efficient" than rail

After 34 years of service, the O-Bahn is "far more efficient" than the rail network, with around 31,000 passenger trips made each weekday, according to a new paper co-authored by University of South Australia Adjunct Professor Derek Scafton.

"The O-Bahn is far more efficient than Adelaide's rail network, in terms of patronage per kilometre," he said. "Its popularity is also increasing each year, with 50 per cent more people using it than in the early 1990s."

According to Scafton, the O-Bahn is nowhere near its capacity. It could conceivably carry 18,000 passengers an hour in each direction with the use of articulated buses.

The controversial \$168 million extension from Gilberton to the CBD via a tunnel under the parklands was completed in 2017, reducing travel time by four minutes.

"There was a lot of opposition to the extension – mainly due to the cost and environmental disruption – but the long-term objectives are sound: to clear congestion on the arterial roads and improve conditions for the remaining traffic," Scafton said.

"The extension has benefitted both motorists and bus commuters, as well as improving conditions for cyclists and pedestrians."

More recently, a major transport study has recommended the O-Bahn be extended to Golden Grove, but the proposal is yet to be discussed in Parliament. It would require the acquisition of extensive tracts of private property, a major hurdle, the university says.

When asked about the paper's findings, a spokesperson for Bus SA, Lauran Huefner, said: "O-Bahn was and is clearly a smart investment; it's quick and effective and travellers have spoken with their feet."

"It remains a bus rapid transit trailblazer and Bus SA would love to see more of it in Adelaide - whether in the form of simple bus-priority measures, like lights or priority lanes, or more complex infrastructure that makes it easier for people to move around."

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